IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1, 3-6, and 8-10 and **add new claims** 11-16, as shown in the complete list of claims that is presented below.

1. (currently amended) A reproducing apparatus comprising:

an input terminal for inputting audio digital data including a ~~plurality of time-base continuous~~ sequence of data block_s each of which consists of a predetermined number of units of data;

a thinning-out unit for thinning out part of the audio digital data on a data block basis; and

a conversion unit for varying the amplitude of either ~~continuous plural~~ a sequence of units of data including the last unit of data of a data block immediately preceding ~~the~~ a thinned data block or ~~continuous plural~~ a sequence of units of data including the first unit of data of a data block immediately following the thinned data block, so that the last unit of data of the immediately preceding data block will be concatenated with the first unit of data of the immediately following data block along a smooth amplitude-varying curve.

2. (original) A reproducing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the amplitude-varying curve is calculated according to a simply increasing or decreasing function.

3. (currently amended) A reproducing apparatus according to claim 2, wherein the simply increasing or decreasing function is determined on the basis of the difference between the amplitude of the last unit of data of the data block immediately preceding the thinned data block and the amplitude of the first unit of data of the data block immediately following the thinned data block, the amplitude of ~~plural~~ the units of data of which the amplitude is to be varied in the immediately following data block, position information of the ~~plural~~ units of data, and the number of ~~the plural~~ data in the sequence of units of data.

4. (currently amended) A reproducing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said conversion unit integrates the ~~continuous plural~~ sequence of units of data the amplitude of which has been varied.

5. (currently amended) A reproducing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the ~~audio digital~~ units of data of each data block are compressed audio data, each data block further includes header information from which the first unit of data of the data block is obtained, and units of data following the first unit of data are decompressed on the basis of the immediately preceding unit of data of the data block.

6. (currently amended) A reproducing apparatus comprising:

an input terminal for inputting audio digital data including a ~~plurality of time-base continuous~~ sequence of data blocks each of which consists of a predetermined number of units of data;

a thinning-out unit for thinning out part of the audio digital data on a data block basis;

a conversion unit for varying the amplitude of either ~~continuous plural~~ a sequence of units of data including the last unit of data of a data block immediately preceding ~~the~~ a thinned data block or ~~continuous plural~~ a sequence of units of data including the first unit of data of a data block immediately following the thinned data block, so that the last unit of data of the immediately preceding data block will be concatenated with the first unit of data of the immediately following data block along a smooth amplitude-varying curve; and

a reproducing unit for reproducing both the units of data converted by ~~means of~~ said conversion unit and ~~the other~~ units of data not converted by ~~means of~~ said conversion unit.

7. (original) A reproducing apparatus according to claim 6, wherein the amplitude-varying curve is calculated according to a simply increasing or decreasing function.

8. (currently amended) A reproducing apparatus according to claim 7, wherein the simply increasing or decreasing function is determined on the basis of the difference between the amplitude of the last ~~unit of~~ data of the data block immediately preceding the thinned data block and the amplitude of the first ~~unit of~~ data of the data block immediately following the thinned data block, the amplitude of ~~plural~~ the units of data of which the amplitude is to be varied in the immediately following data block, position information of the ~~plural~~ sequence of units of data, and the number of ~~the plural~~ units of data in the sequence of units of data.

9. (currently amended) A reproducing apparatus according to claim 6, wherein said conversion unit integrates the ~~continuous plural~~ sequence of units of data the amplitude of which has been varied.

10. (currently amended) A reproducing apparatus according to claim 6, wherein the ~~audio digital~~ units of data of each data block are compressed audio data, each data block further includes header information from which the first ~~unit of~~ data of the data block is obtained, and ~~units of~~ data following the first ~~unit of~~ data are decompressed on the basis of the immediately preceding ~~unit of~~ data of the data block.

11. (new) A reproducing apparatus comprising:

    an input terminal for inputting audio digital data including a first sequence of data blocks each of which consists of a predetermined number of units of data, the predetermined number being the same for all of the data blocks in the first sequence;

    a thinning-out unit for removing data blocks from the first sequence to form a second sequence of data blocks, the data blocks in the second sequence having been separated in the first sequence by the removed data blocks; and

    a conversion unit for varying the amplitude of units of data adjacent boundaries between the data blocks of the second sequence so as to smooth transitions between the data blocks of the second sequence.

12. (new) A reproducing apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the conversion unit comprises means for varying the amplitude of the units of data adjacent the boundaries in accordance with a monotonic increasing or monotonic decreasing function.

13. (new) A reproducing apparatus according to claim 12, wherein the function is a linear function.

14. (new) A reproducing apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the units of data are uncompressed audio data.

15. (new) A reproducing apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the units of data are compressed audio data.

16. (new) A reproducing apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the first sequence of data blocks has about twice the number of data blocks as the second sequence, the second sequence being formed by removing every other data block from the first sequence.